

three hundred and fifty acres, they have been offered eighty dollars per acre in the bonds of the State by perfectly solvent parties, and the land alone can be sold for enough to leave the whole of the Penitentiary site and water power almost, if not entirely, without cost to the State.

They have been charged with "exceeding their power," when the law, in express words, authorizes them to buy coal or other property to be used in connection with the Penitentiary.

It has been charged that the Committee purchased a "defective title," when in fact the title was examined and reported perfectly valid by some of the best lawyers of the State.

Under these circumstances the Committee feel that they have the right to ask for a Committee of investigation into their conduct. They are prepared to prove:

1st. That the property purchased is admirably suited for the location of a Penitentiary, to supply material for its erection, and for the remunerative employment of the labor of the convicts.

2d. That the property has very great present, and much greater prospective, value. Even if used to supply granite and timber for the erection of the Penitentiary, it can, after its completion, if it be thought best not to employ the convicts in any of the forms of the manufactures of iron or other metals, be sold at great profit to the State.

3d. That all the statements impugning the motives of the Committee are utterly false; that the purchase was at a fair price and should not be repudiated by the State.

Finally, the Committee beg leave to state that offers have been made to them for the purchase of the whole or part of that portion of the property, against which so many objections are made, which will enable the State to get rid of the same without loss. While their opinion is still that such a step should not be taken, they ask that the Committee of investigation shall report as to the expediency of such sale. If the General